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ABSTRACT

The instructional concept guide is part of a system developed for tutor training and support. It is primarily designed for volunteers, but it can also be adapted to the training of paraprofessional tutors for any type of adult literacy program. A key component in the system is the Tutor Support Library, consisting of Instructional Concept Guides (training and reference aids for tutors) and Functional Content Units (models for the practical application of tutoring skills). Guide Six is designed to help the tutor understand an approach for teaching adults to read which does not involve the learning of phonics rules. It is an informal method of decoding words which involves attempting to break the word into familiar parts or elements. Many examples of the process are given utilizing words from several basic word lists. Topics presented for the tutor are: beginning reading methods for children, adult decoding approaches, preparing the student for the decoding process, developing decoding ability, and defining stages of decoding ability. A table delineates three stages in developing decoding competence. (Author/MS)

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RALSU

TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY

Instructional Concept Guide No. 6

WORD CONCEPTS

An Adult Approach to Decoding Skills

by

Robert A. Palmatier

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Regional Adult Literacy Service Unit

A Right to Read Community Based Project

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CE 006 144

FOREWORD

The ability to read has been taken for granted in the United States for as long as most of us can remember. Unfortunately the "us" in the previous statement refers to those in the population who are indeed able to read --- for example, those of you reading this message. Adult readers make up an exclusive fraternity and seldom find themselves involved with non-readers. But in this century the tempo and technology of American life have increased dramatically. And more and more we see that a significant proportion of our citizens do not have the reading ability society requires.

In the 1970's, the Community Based Division of the Right to Read Effort addressed itself to overcoming what is rapidly becoming a crisis in the area of adult literacy. A common bond for many of the projects supported by this division of Right to Read is the use of volunteer tutors to teach the older, out-of-school individual who needs reading help. It has been generally found that, while the desire to tutor may be "born," the ability to tutor needs to be "made." Consequently the cry has gone out, "We have the volunteers but we do not have a system for training them to tutor."

RALSU, the Regional Adult Literacy Service Unit, a Right to Read Community Based project, has therefore accepted as its major responsibility the development of a tutor training and support

system. It is primarily designed for volunteers, but it can also be adapted to the training of para-professional tutors for any type of adult literacy program. The complete system includes tutor training, a support system for the working tutor, and evaluation strategies for both programs and tutors.

A key component in t[illegible] system is the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY. This consists of two series of units entitled Instructional Concept Guides and Functional Content Units. The Concept Guides orient and train beginning tutors and serve thereafter as reference aids for the on-the-job tutor. The Functional Content Units are designed as models for the practical application of the teaching skills gained in the tutor training. For convenience, all Guides and Units are separately bound.

The Instructional Concept Guide that follows this "Foreword" is one of the following:

1. Getting Together: Establishing a Working Tutorial Relationship
2. Teaching One-to-One: A Diagnostic Approach to Beginning Tutoring
3. Student-Centered Tutoring: Using Initial Lesson Results to Set Future Goals
4. Help: Inside and Outside the Tutoring Agency
5. Process and Product: A Guide for Assessment of Community Tutoring Programs
6. Word Concepts: An Adult Approach to Decoding Skills
7. The Teaching of Sight Words: Ways and Means
8. The Language Experience Approach: Application for Tutoring Adults in Reading

9. The Directed Reading Approach: A Lesson Organization Procedure Adapted for Use with Adults

10. The Newspaper: A Source of High-Interest Instructional Material for Adults

11. Resources: A Guide for Using Published Materials in Adult Literacy Programs

12. Splitting Up: Terminating a Tutoring Relationship

Guide 1 is an orientation to tutoring; Guides 2 and 3 lead the tutor through the first sessions with a student. Except for Guides 1, 2, and 3, however, the booklets need not necessarily be presented in consecutive order. Guides 6 through 10, for example, explain in detail teaching procedures that can be used to teach the lessons described in Guides 2 and 3. Other Guides, as their titles imply, deal with supplemental helps for the tutor and with program assessment.

Hopefully, these materials as a whole will satisfy a long felt need expressed by many persons involved in the management of adult literacy programs. It is also hoped that the flexibility of format will make the publications adaptable to individualizing requirements within programs.

WORD CONCEPTS

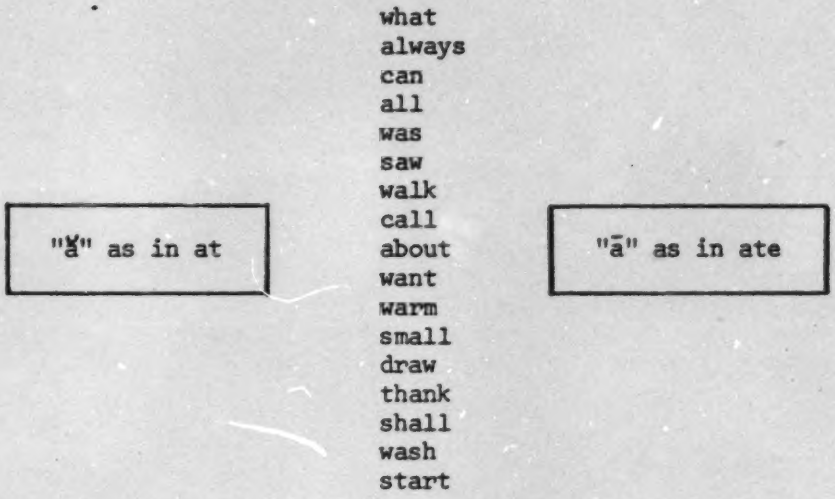
An Adult Approach to Decoding Skills

ă	ā
ăt	āte
hăs	gāve
ăsk	cāme
ăm	māde
ănd	ā
blăck	plāy
thăt	todāy
răn	sāy

The words shown in the above chart contain examples of long and short "a" sounds. Each of these words is taken from the Basic Sight Vocabulary List* learned by children in the first and second grades. Below is a list of other words having the "a" sound taken from the same

*Basic Sight Vocabulary List as given by Edward Dolch in his text, Psychology and Teaching of Reading. Champaign, Illinois: Garrard Press, 1951.

list. Which group would you place them with?



What first appears to be a simple phonics rule turns into a difficult problem unless you pick your words carefully. Even with the most basic list of words, it is not possible to define the sounds of "a" as only long or short. This is one of the reasons why adults have difficulty when attempting to follow phonic rules for decoding words. They are as familiar with words in which the rules do not work as with words in which the rules do work. This is especially true when you begin to consider additional words adults see every day.

entrance	Mazda	elementary school
car	Macdonalds	carpet
water	apartment	breakfast
pharmacy	margarine	Eastern
auto	learning	Cadillac
start	army	Sears
chair	bank	Garage
market	lavatory	orange
Coca Cola	fireman	cigarettes
Delta	park	read

If rules do not work, then how can an adult be taught to read? This Guide is designed to help you understand an approach for helping adults learn to read which does not involve the learning of phonic rules but uses another approach to developing decoding concepts.

Learning to Read

Think back. How did you learn to read? With a basal reader? In school? By phonics? Do you really remember? If you do recall your beginning reading days and the method by which you learned, your memory is better than that of most adults. One reason for not recalling the method by which you learned to read may be due to the fact that your teacher did not identify her particular teaching method. Even if she did name the method, phonics may have been called sounding or the approach may have been called by the material publisher's name.

Beginning Reading Methods for Children

If you are to help another person learn to read, it will help to understand some of the methods for teaching reading. Even though you will not use many of the methods which are designed for use in schools with young children, having some understanding of these methods may help.

The total act of reading involves two large areas of concern: word identification and understanding. A reader must first be able to recognize words, and then learn to understand the message contained in those words. Often the first step, identification of words, is called

decoding or word recognition. The second part, understanding, is most often referred to as comprehension. Although they are usually spoken of as step one and step two, the two are normally taught together. Understanding the message of a word helps in learning to decode or recognize that word in print. Since a student usually begins by learning words he already uses in speaking, it is not difficult to combine decoding and comprehension. This Guide will first explain some of the terms used to speak about the beginning reading process. With a brief understanding of the vocabulary used in talking about reading and the methods of instruction, you will then consider how to alter these methods for use with adults.

If you learned to read in school, you probably recall using a basal reader. Basal refers to a series a text books designed for use in learning basic reading skills. There are many different basal reading series, and they use a number of methods for both decoding and comprehension instruction. Rather than use only one method, most basals combine several approaches - including sight or whole words, context or meaning clues, configuration or shape clues, and some sort of letter-sound relationship often called phonics. Since most teachers put several methods together and use what they like best from each, you most likely experienced several methods in your early reading instruction. Today, reading experts still advise the "little of this 'n' a little of that" method; only they dress it up by calling it the eclectic approach.

There has been much disagreement over the best way to teach reading. Often the argument is oversimplified and referred to as phonics vs. the whole word approach. Actually, it is almost impossible to find

a reader who learned by just one of these methods, or a teacher who uses only one of them. The preference of teachers is usually to use both methods, along with several others. It may help if you understand the basic idea of the whole word and phonic approaches.

In teaching words by the whole word or sight method, teachers point out only the total word and have students memorize that "dog" is dog. Good teachers know that it helps to point out characteristics of a word; so, they usually show students how to notice configuration clues or shape. Thus, a student is shown that dog and run have different shapes. Teachers also point out initial letters and help the student to understand that he can know right away that a word beginning with the letter "r" cannot be dog. As soon as a few words are known, the student is shown how a word's use in a sentence can also help to narrow down the possibilities. The word "dog" is not a very likely possibility in a sentence like, "See Tom polish the new red _____." All of the methods for making word learning easier are usually used with what is called a sight or whole word approach. Thus, the name does not really tell the whole story about the teaching method.

Before thinking about what the phonics approach is, a few words about "sight" words may help. Some reading teachers mean simply memorizing whole words when they refer to sight words. Most, however, speak of sight words as those words which a reader can say the instant he sees them, without thought or "decoding" time. This definition of a sight word is the one used throughout the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY materials. In recent years some reading "experts" have come up with a new meaning for the term sight word. These "experts," often known as linguists, identify

words as sight words if they cannot be easily sounded out by the decoding method used. Thus, a word like "what" which does not match the decoding pattern of similar words like sat, rat, and flat is called a sight word.

Phonics is not as easily explained as the whole word approach. There are two basic types of phonics. One type is called synthetic or single-letter phonics. The process used in learning by this method is to first learn sounds for letters, like "duh" for "d," and then put those sounds together to form words. With this method, the student learns that "duh-ah-guh" is dog. Unlike the sight approach, it does not start with words and is sometimes discouraging to students who come to reading lessons with the idea that they will be learning to read words. Also, the drawn out sounds that result when you try to say each letter sound sometimes leave the student still unaware that "duh-ah-guh" is dog, the word he has been speaking since childhood. In most materials where this approach is used, some sight words are taught at the same time the student is learning to sound out unknown words.

A second type of phonics is called the analytic approach. In this method the student first learns some sight words and then is taught how letter sounds can be used to explain the way a word sounds. This is the method in which students learn about long and short vowels and initial and final letter sounds. Rather than trying to put words together, this method shows the common sounds in words so that the student will know what sounds to try in new words with similar letter patterns. For instance, he learns that hot, cat, hut,

hit, and bet have short vowels and that very often similar short words ending in a consonant (non-vowel letters) also have short vowel sounds in the middle. In the same way he learns that hate, fete, hope, huge, bite, and other short words ending in a final "e" usually have long vowels. This method is called analytic because the student learns to analyze new words with sounds learned in words first presented as sight words.

Many new reading materials use a type of analytical approach called word families or word patterns. In this method the student learns sounds by comparing words with similar letter and sound patterns. He learns to recognize "ot" family words by learning word groups like hot, lot, cot, tot, dot, rot, not, pot, spot, slot, shot, etc. This leads him to be able to recognize a new word like "trot" as a member of the same pattern group. Some materials refer to this method as initial consonant or sound substitution. The strength of this method is that it approaches decoding from a whole word approach and quickly adds large numbers of words with a similar pattern to the student's vocabulary. It is also a valuable method as it emphasizes looking for differences in words, a process often called discrimination.

Adult Decoding Approaches

Perhaps this brief description of the decoding methods used in reading instruction has helped you to recall your own learning. It also may have made you realize that you do not consciously use many of these methods as you read today. Few adults consciously decode

words. Most readers have developed such a large sight vocabulary that they seldom meet a word they do not know. Much of this is due to the large amount of repetition in our language. A small number of words like the, and, then, but, at, in, on, etc. are reused so frequently that the unusual words do not come up often. In fact, the list* presented in Instructional Concept Guide No. 7, "The Teaching of Sight Words: Ways and Means," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY includes 500 words which make up as much as 80% of the total words found in most printed materials. This means that, no matter how you first learned, as an adult you read mostly by sight. Given that, how do you approach unfamiliar words? Try this one:

longitudinarian

Did you know the word by sight? Probably not! Then how did you go about pronouncing it? Perhaps you noticed "long" or even the base of "longitude" in the first part of the word. If you were not familiar with the word "longitude" you may have seen "itude" as similar to the end of words like attitude, magnitude, gratitude, altitude, etc. Next, "in" may have popped out at you; and the common ending "arian" (meaning one who practices ...), as used in veterinarian, vegetarian, Unitarian, parliamentarian, etc., may have been familiar. With the parts in mind, you no doubt tried putting it together. Did

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*The Great Atlantic and Pacific Sight Word List, adapted from the American Heritage List of Words most frequently found in material of the third reader difficulty level. The list was reported in Journal of Educational Research in 1972 by Wayne Otts and Robert Chester. Approximately 90% of the words are also of highest frequency in adult materials.

all the parts sound right as you first picked them out? Not if you chose to single out "long" since the "g" sound in "page" must be used rather than the usual "g" sound in long. That change was necessary for the "g" sound to blend smoothly with the "i" which follows.

Although you may have broken the word into other parts, you probably used a similar process. You may have done it so quickly that you were hardly aware that you were breaking the word into parts which you know from other words. Try these other difficult words to see if you can become more aware of how you tackle words not in your sight vocabulary:

stereochemistry	facilitation
religiosity	antiregimentation
retaliatory	intraplanatarianism
supersegmentation	adversarial
abnormalization	unconvertably

Adults who read well use an informal method of decoding words with which they are unfamiliar. Rather than look at the entire word, they attempt to break it into parts or elements with which they are familiar. Since each reader has a different stock of familiar word elements, the method used may differ from reader to reader. In most cases more proficient readers are able to break words into fewer and larger parts than less able readers. Since this is the natural method of adult decoding, the concern of a tutor in helping an adult student to improve his reading is to develop an understanding and utilization of this approach. Where do you begin?

Preparing the Student for the Decoding Process

The same conditions which caused an adult not to learn to read as a child may still exist. Even though many adults did not learn to read because of home or health conditions, most did not learn because they were unable to profit from the instruction offered. As discussed in Instructional Concept Guide No. 1, "Getting Together: Establishing a Working Tutorial Relationship," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY, most adults who come to literacy programs have sufficient intelligence to learn to read. Thus, their inability to profit from instruction received earlier must relate to their lack of preparation for that instruction or to the quality of the instruction itself. More often than not, the two factors worked together to cause the student to continue into adulthood as an illiterate.

Regardless of the reasons for the lack of the basic skills necessary for learning to read, these skills must be dealt with in beginning to tutor an adult. These basic skills are most often referred to by reading teachers as reading readiness skills. Rather than involving the learning of words and comprehension, they deal with basic language concepts. In order to learn to read, a person must first understand the nature of our language. Until he has a fair command of the spoken language, he will be unlikely to learn to deal with printed language. This is equally true for both children and adults who are about to begin reading instruction.

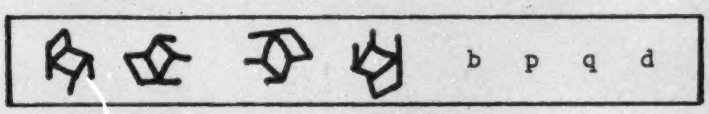
What language concepts must be understood? First, the student must clearly understand the relationship between spoken and printed

language. He must be aware of the parallel between listening as the access mode to spoken language and reading as the access mode to printed language. Without this understanding, he will not be able to relate to the purpose and process for learning to read. Secondly, the concept of words identifying objects and activities is required. Unless the learner knows that words are labels for things already known in his world, he does not have a purpose for reading nor any understanding of the communication process.

These basic concepts of what language is and how it operates are taught through illustrating the relationships between spoken and printed language. A best first step is to begin with the print form of a person's name and to relate it to both its spoken form and to its identification of a specific object, the individual. Identification of other objects with labels can follow. The next step is to insure the understanding that a printed word stands for one spoken word and one object or idea. The labeling approach begins this skill development. It should be followed by illustrating the number of words in multiple-word statements. An illiterate adult may be no more aware that peanutbutter'n'jelly is not a single word than is a typical five year old. Much practice with multi-word statements may be needed before an adult can readily identify the number of words heard in a spoken statement and contained in a printed statement. Before he finishes with this level of development, he should be able to count the number of words in paragraphs from the daily newspaper. He can identify this activity as being clearly related to what he thinks reading is, and also will be easily able to practice at home.

When these word concepts have been mastered, letter concepts must be approached. First, the idea of words being broken into a number of sounds should be illustrated. As the tutor, you should sound out words orally. Beginning with two sounds (as in the compound word door-knob), you should gradually progress through more difficult levels of breaking words into sound parts to the point where the student is able to identify any word you sound out. This ability to blend individual sounds together, in order to identify the properly spoken word which they represent, is vital. The student will need this concept to understand later sounding instruction and to also have a basic understanding that words can be dealt with in other than a whole word recognition approach. After you have helped the student to the point that he is able to identify any word you sound, he should be asked to sound words for you to identify. Ability to do this proves that he thoroughly understands the concept of breaking words down into sounds. At this stage, the idea of sounds being related to specific letter symbols should not be introduced.

Another aspect of words is letters. It is important to consider that an individual unable to deal with letters in reading may not understand some of the unique characteristics of letters. This includes both form and sound aspects. A person unfamiliar with the characteristics of letters may not know that letters cannot be placed in different positions and still retain their identify. Consider the comparison between turning a chair into several positions and the turning of a letter shape into similar positions:



The idea of space and orientation relationships must be learned before a student is capable of discriminating among letters. Not only does reading require the ability to discriminate between letters of the same case, it also requires knowledge of the relationships between upper and lower case forms. Learning to identify letters by name should be a part of the initial reading instruction for adults who cannot already make these relationships. However, this should not be done before beginning to deal with sight word learning. It is easier for some individuals to learn to identify words than to identify letters. Also, if the beginning of word learning is put off, there is the danger that the student may feel that he is not, in fact, learning to read, and therefore he might quit coming to tutoring sessions. Letter identification instruction should proceed along with sight word learning. Each activity will provide reinforcement for the other.

Teaching students the shape and position concepts of letters is a matter of explaining and providing guidance in developing orientation. When writing letters and words on cards for student use, both a margin line and a base line should be used. Some samples are show below:

Any confusion in letter identification, either in the case of single letters or as they are used within words, should be cleared up by pointing out how the letters relate to the guide lines. For instance,

the often encountered confusion between b, p, d, and q may be cleared up by instructing the student to view the letters as having tails and to tell the difference by recalling the following distinctions:

b faces away from the margin and has its tail up,
d faces the margin line and has its tail up also,
p faces away from the margin line but has its tail down, and
q faces the margin line and also has its tail down.

These concepts will be reinforced each time the student uses cards in which the letters appear, either alone or within words in relation to the guide lines. The guide lines can be reduced in intensity until it is felt that the concept is mastered to the point that the student possesses his own mental images of the guide lines.

Once the basic concepts of word and letter use in the reading and language process is understood, instruction should move on to developing the concept of meaning. This is vital to decoding, since accomplished readers depend greatly on their understanding of the context of reading material for clues to word identification. As with the word and sound skills, this instruction must begin with the oral mode. First, the student should listen to you read material in which he has an interest. Providing a model of the reading process is vital to developing full understanding of the purposes and procedures involved in reading. The student should not be allowed a passive role, however. The task should be designed so that he is clearly listening to determine answers to specific questions. This process is more fully described in Instructional Concept Guide No. 2, "Teaching One-to-One: A Diagnostic Approach to Beginning Tutoring,"

of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY. A sample lesson is also provided. Through such activities, the student will learn the procedures for following details and sequence of thought in communication. Until he learns the concepts of logical consistency and sequence in oral language expression, he will not be prepared to discover the same patterns in written communication.

A valuable approach for developing basic understanding of how reading fits into the total concept of language communication is the Language Experience Approach. Through this procedure, the student learns that what can be said can be written down, and that what is written down can be returned to the oral communication mode through reading. Instructional Concept Guide No. 8, "The Language Experience Approach: Application for Tutoring Adults in Reading," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY goes into detail concerning the rationale for, and use of this instructional method. In addition to developing further the understanding of what reading is, this procedure leads directly to the beginning of sight word learning. Through this method, your student will identify words which have high priority for him. The use of the words in his own story will facilitate his learning of these words in relationship to their use in context as well.

When your student arrives at the stage where you, as tutor, are sure that he thoroughly understands the previously described concepts of language and their relationship to reading, he is prepared to begin work in a systematic program of decoding instruction. The process for beginning with sight word memorization and continuing on to develop other methods of identifying printed words is outlined in the remaining sections.

Developing Decoding Ability

It must be recognized that an adult is in a hurry to read, and that he has specific material which he wishes to be able to read. This demands that his instruction begin with two types of information. He must learn to recognize the high utility words which are repeated throughout any reading material and words which appear constantly in his everyday world. To achieve the first objective, a tutor should begin with a basic sight word list. The A&P List included in Instructional Concept Guide No. 7, "The Teaching of Sight Words: Ways and Means," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY is a good source of high utility words. The list is composed of the 500 words most often used in printed material, any material. In addition, the list is arranged in order from the most used to the least used of these 500 high utility words. Thus, a tutor can be assured that teaching a student to recognize the first word will enable him to use his knowledge of that word frequently in any material he attempts to read. Since these words must be learned so completely that the student recognizes them the instant he sees any one of the words, memorization is the only reasonable approach. Memorization of sight words requires a great deal of practice and can be done in a variety of ways. Guide No. 7, "The Teaching of Sight Words: Ways and Means," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY, offers a number of activities to be used with adults in developing instant recognition of sight words.

At the same time a student is learning high utility words, he will also wish to learn to identify words used in his daily life.

Thus, a similar approach may be used to learn words which he requests be included. His desire to learn words like danger, poison, bank, bus schedule, restaurant, pay check, deductions, employment office, and other such words will be sufficient to overcome the apparent difficulty of the words. Including these words in the student's learning program is vital if his interest is to be maintained.

Assume that you have decided to teach your student the first 100 of the A&P words listed below:

First 100 A&P Words

the	they	all	each	words	would	my	first
a	I	had	will	about	water	no	way
to	with	from	up	by	little	go	over
and	his	be	many	like	two	get	too
of	said	can	we	see	has	now	than
in	at	but	then	so	did	long	good
you	as	there	her	if	people	find	use
is	have	not	or	these	an	look	day
he	she	when	out	make	which	made	are
it	what	how	some	into	could	just	
that	one	were	them	him	time	big	
was	this	your	write	other	more	very	
on	for	do	their	word	down	back	

As soon as your student has learned to recognize a few of these words when they are shown on word cards, you must begin to work on his ability to recognize these same words in sentences. Thus, he should be shown how to form sentences using the words he knows. If his personal interest words are also being learned, these too may be included in his efforts to make sentences. At first, you will have to form sentences of the words to show him the process. Next, he should begin to do it on his own. Arranging the word cards he uses for learning the words into sentences is a good starting point.

However, it is important that sentences formed be written on paper so that the student visualizes the use of these same words in situations other than on word cards. Below are some sentences formed only from words in the initial 100 section of the A&P List. Look back at the list and see if you can make others in the spaces left.

Using Basic Words in Sentence Context

1. Will you have some?
2. Do not write very big.
3. Look at _____ the people in the water.
4. How many _____ can _____ use?
5. He can _____ _____ _____ day.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

As soon as the idea of making sentences with words the student has learned is understood, he must be shown that these words also exist in printed material. The newspaper may be the best place to begin. Show the student how to locate words he knows on a page of newsprint. One method for doing this is to demonstrate the process by marking one of the words he knows each time that it appears on a page of newsprint. Using a yellow highlighter to do this aids in illustrating the process. Students find using a felt-tip marker to

mark the words they kno. more motivating than using a regular pen or pencil. An added bonus from using the highlighter is the fact that so much of the page is turned to yellow with even the few high utility words your student has learned. This same process may also be used with material which the student wishes to read but cannot. By marking the words he knows and then reading, with him responsible for the highlighted words, further dramatizes that he is really learning to read through this process.

Next, the student needs to learn that the same words learned as individual units can be useful in identifying other words. Thus, he comes to understand that basic sight words can be elements in other words. The process for developing this concept involves two procedures. First, he should be shown how compound words can be formed using the basic words he has learned. Look again at the first 100 words of the A&P List. Below you will find several compound words formed from these words. See if you can form the remainder of the 24 possible compound words using only words from this list.

Building New Words by Combining Basic Words

1.	into	7.	13.	19.
2.	onto	8.	14.	20.
3.	outlook	9.	15.	21.
4.	forget	10.	16.	22.
5.		11.	17.	23.
6.		12.	18.	24.

The fact that this procedure demonstrates to the student that he can expand his stock of known words by nearly 25% in this manner is important to the development of the concept that basic words may

be elements in larger words. To further reinforce the concept, the personal words selected for learning by the student may be used. He should be shown that many of the high utility words he has learned are elements in these words. Try finding words from the initial 100 A&P words in the words below:

Finding Basic Words in Larger Words	
transistor	engine
hatchback	rebate
Winston	overalls
Watergate	entrance
apartment	income
cartoon	theater
Honda	cup

In some cases, the student will find parts of words which match those on the list, but then find that they do not sound the same when they are included as part of a larger word. This may cause some confusion, but is another concept with which the student must learn to deal. After repeated help and practice with this, he will come to understand and accept the idea that the pronunciation of word elements will sometimes be changed in order for sounds in a word to blend together smoothly. This concept is no different and no more complex than the idea of recognizing that "duh-ah-guh" represents the word dog. Since there are no reliable rules for such sounding alterations, the student must simply learn a process of trial-and-error. It is

important that he come to understand that all of the methods for decoding words are merely designed to help him approximate the pronunciation closely enough to recognize the word as the print designation of a word already in his listening and speaking vocabulary. If, in fact, a word he is attacking is not in his listening and speaking vocabulary, he will not be able to pronounce the word. Furthermore, he will not even know if it is, in fact, a real word. This idea, that a word is only a word if it is within an individual's listening and speaking vocabulary, is a vital concept for tutors to understand. Whether or not a word is a real word to an individual is dependent upon whether or not that individual has experienced prior contact with the word in listening and speaking situations. Of course, once the learning to read process moves on to the point where dictionary use is possible, there is another method available for proving the "reality" of a word. However, that is still a very distant stage for most adult literacy students.

Learning the decoding process continues, next, with high frequency non-word elements. In this stage, the student is introduced to the concepts of adding to his vocabulary stock by adding endings and then beginnings to words. This process includes the full range of <u>prefixes</u>, <u>suffixes</u>, and <u>inflected</u> forms. Inflected forms should be introduced first by showing the student how a basic word he knows can be used as the basis for other words. Examples, such as the various forms of <u>run</u> shown below, should be demonstrated until the student is able to do the same process with other words he has learned.

run	runs	runner	running	runners

Practice this method with the words from the first 100 A&P words listed below:

Adding Endings to Basic Words				
1. write	writer	writes	writing	written
2. water				
3. time				
4. find				
5. look				

As in the case of compound words, you again can demonstrate to the student a rapid expansion of his vocabulary stock with the learning of a general attack concept. Development of this understanding should provide great motivational thrust for the student as he realizes a rapid increase in his power over words.

A short second step in furthering this concept is the introduction of high utility suffixes. Some of the most often used examples are shown below:

Some Frequently Used Suffixes			
-ly	-ed	-ance	-en
-er	-y	-ness	-al
-ish	-ing	-ology	-tion
-ment	-est	-graph	-ate
-ful	-ize	-phone	-ous
-ive	-ism	-ist	
-fy	-ic		

When the concept of expanding vocabulary power by adding endings has been mastered, the student is ready to move on to achieving the same understanding of prefixes. The same approach, where the most used examples are selected, should be continued. Below is a listing of the highest frequency prefixes:

Of the 20,000 words in Thorndike's Word List, one fourth have prefixes. Only fifteen prefixes account for 80% of these 5,000 instances.

ab ... from	dis ... apart	pre ... before
ad ... to	en .... in	pro ... in front of
be ... by	ex .... out	re .... back
com .. with	in .... into	sub ... under
de ... from	in .... not	un .... not

In developing these concepts for making new words through addition to words already known, it is important to go through the steps of demonstrating the concept, adding parts to basic words, learning to recognize base words and added parts in words, and practicing building new words from known basic words and high utility prefixes and suffixes. Adding endings to words has already been illustrated above. Below you will find examples of activities for adding prefixes and building words from known elements:

Adding Prefixes to Basic Words

1. unto	6. un_____
2. prolong	7. in_____
3. unlike	8. ad_____
4. multi_____	9. un_____
5. un _____	10. mis_____

Word Building from Basic Segments

un	to	er	1.	adjuster	(3)
pro	long	ing	2.	longing	(2)
multi	like	s	3.	likeable	(2)
in	use	able	4.		( )
ad	do	ed	5.		( )
mis	just	full	6.		( )
re	made	ly	7.		( )
ex	make	tion	8.		( )
			9.		( )
			10.		( )

A student may choose to make words using patterns other than adding a single element from each column (e.g., inadmissible).

A final step in understanding the concept of locating known elements in words is often referred to as the word family concept. The idea is to illustrate how a group of words shares a common element. In most reading programs, this involves dealing with the idea that words in which only the beginning elements change share common pronunciation patterns. The an family illustrated below is one example:

an	tan	Jan	pan
ran	fan	can	van
man	Dan	Nan	can

While this idea is basic to the concept of word-element-oriented decoding, it should not stop here. Students should next be exposed to the logical extension of this idea through illustrations of how common word elements may be found in various positions in words. Examples of the sort of pattern which should be illustrated are shown

below:

Words Sharing Common Elements

at	long	fun
fat	longer	sun
cat	longing	bun
rat	belong	run
mat	belongs	running
bat	prolong	funny
sat	prolonging	runner
flat	furlong	nun
scat	along	inundated
splat	elongated	under

Even though the process has been explained such that it would seem that a specific sequence of development is necessary, this may not be the case. In some instances, students will be so highly motivated to develop large stocks of personal interest words that the process may be altered to show all of the concepts indicated in words of their own choosing. In other cases, much of the basic vocabulary memorization may not be necessary, and the concepts of rapid expansion through addition of word elements may be nearly the first step. However, at whatever stage a student enters the literacy program, it is important that he be made aware of these concepts. In some cases, a student may appear to use the concepts but not fully understand the principles of the operations. He can quickly be evaluated through checking his approaches to attacking difficult words. Especially in cases where a large sight vocabulary exists, learning these concepts can produce a dramatic improvement in the student's understanding of the reading process. Clear explanation of the procedures of which he

seems already minimally aware may produce an "aha" response resulting in nearly overnight leaps into higher levels of skill development and concurrent increase in the student's concept of himself as a reader.

Caution concerning the need to advance beyond the stage of introduction is necessary. Knowing the concepts of adding elements to known words and finding elements in other words is not sufficient. The student must be able to process difficult words quickly using these procedures. The only way to develop such mastery over the process is to practice and practice and practice! Such practice should continue along with memorization of all of the high utility words on the A&P list. Once a skill is introduced, each lesson should include practice in each step until the student is able to apply the principles quickly in any situation and with any words. In fact, a student who knows well the concepts of word-element-oriented decoding may enjoy attacking nonsense words.

Defining Readers According to Decoding Ability

The level at which a student may be taught and the approaches which may be used are largely dependent upon decoding ability. Throughout the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY the concept of stages in decoding development is used. These stages are defined in terms of the student's ability to handle decoding using the word element approach. With the identification of a reader's stage of mastery in the decoding sequence, the type of approaches which may be used and the material which is appropriate follow naturally.

The following table delineates the three stages in the decoding sequence used in the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY. Approaches and materials which relate to each of these levels are also indicated. This chart should be used as a guide to understanding the basis for lesson plan ideas presented in the various Guides and for understanding the leveling of materials listed in Instructional Concept Guide No. 11, "Resources: A Guide for Using Published Materials in Adult Literacy Programs," of the TUTOR SUPPORT LIBRARY. The listing of various decoding competencies indicated for the three levels may also be used as a diagnostic and evaluative checklist.

Stages in Developing Decoding Competence

STAGE	STUDENT LEARNS:	APPROACHES USED:	MATERIALS:
I	- personal need to learn to read - the relationship of words to objects and concepts - the relationship of spoken words to words in print - the concept that a word in print is equivalent to one spoken word - the concept of high frequency, high utility sight words - the concept of highly probable sound-spelling correspondences -- especially in initial letter position - the concept that beginning word sound limits the letter with which a word can begin	- reading to the student from material in which he/she has a personal interest - listening comprehension activities - labeling picture cards with a single word - identifying words on signs and other objects in the student's environment - language experience statements and stories - identifying initial letter in words spoken by tutor	- orally presented words - picture cards - signs - orally presented stories and personal interest information - chart paper - sentences with word boundaries illustrated

Stages in Developing Decoding Competence (continued)

STAGE	STUDENT LEARNS:	APPROACHES USED:	MATERIALS:
II	- the basic high utility words in the A&P 500 - the concept that context limits the possibilities of word occurrences - the concept that compound words may be formed by combining sight words - the concept that new words may be formed by using word endings on base words - the concept that new words may be formed by using word prefixes on base words - the concept that word elements may be found within longer words - the concept that words may be constructed with word elements - the concept that unfamiliar words may be deciphered by breaking them down into parts	- language experience approaches - sight word memorization - activities dealing with word element identification - activities building words from common elements - reading in controlled vocabulary trade books - cloze sentences and paragraphs for identifying possible word choices - co-reading with unknown words read by tutor - locating known words in printed material	- word cards - lined paper and pencils - chart paper - selected structural analysis practice materials - controlled vocabulary books - newspapers - personal words selected by the student - highlighted high-interest materials - selected high-utility practice materials

Stages in Developing Decoding Competence (continued)

STAGE	STUDENT LEARNS:	APPROACHES USED:	MATERIALS:
III	- the meaning relationship of basic prefix, suffix, and root word elements - application of basic decoding skills in a wide variety of reading situations	- vocabulary meaning study - directed reading activities - practice of simulated word and survival tasks - free reading with follow-up discussion	- selected vocabulary programs - high-interest reading material - work and survival-oriented skill practice materials - paperback and trade books